

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 09578

DEFENSE ALSO FOR BARRINGER, OASD/ISA/FMRA AND
CASF/XOXXE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-L
TAGS:
SUBJECT: RAF FAIRFORD -- RED HORSE

REF: (A) LONDON 9474; (B) MACDONALD-BARRINGER TELCON
15 JUNE

1. ON THE BASIS OF DISCUSSIONS WITH SENIOR MOD
OFFICIALS (FACER, PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MULLEY; NELSON,
DUS/AIR, AND PERRY, HEAD OF DS-8), IT EMERGES THAT MOD
AND PSA UNDERSTANDING OF THE "PEACETIME" EMPLOYMENT
OF A RED HORSE UJUADRON IN THE UK WOULD NOT RPT NOT
ENTAIL REPLACEMENT OF UK "DIRECT EMPLOYED LABOR" (DEL)
AND THAT RED HORSE UTILIZATION WOULD NOT INVOLVE
DISPLACEMENT OF ANY UK CONTRACTORS OR OF WORK THAT
"NORMALLY" WOULD BE GIVEN TO A UK CONTRACTOR.
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2. THE BRITISH CONSIDER THAT IN NORMAL PEACETIME
OPERATIONS RED HORSE UTILIZATION SHOULD BE LIMITED
ESSENTIALLY TO RAPID RUNWAY REPAIR TRAINING, ALTHOUGH
THEY ACCEPT THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS TO ALLOW
EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE OF THE RED HORSE "WARTIME MISSION"
MIGHT EMBRACE OTHER MISCELLANEOUS PROJECTS -- BUT THESE

WOULD BE SUBJECT TO "APPROPRIATE CONSULTATIONS" WITH PSA BEFORE ANY PROJECT WAS UNDERTAKEN. THE MOD ACCEPTS THE IMPORTANCE OF USAF HAVING A GOOD WARTIME OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY TO UNDERTAKE RAPID RUNWAY REPAIR BUT SEES THE PRESENT PROBLEM IN THE CONTEXT OF RED HORSE PEACETIME EMPLOYMENT AND ITS POSSIBLE ADVERSE IMPACT ON UK LABOR EMPLOYMENT (THE PSA WORKFORCE) AND THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY AS A WHOLE.

3. THE POINT HAS BEEN PRESSED ON WHITEHALL THAT BECAUSE OF INCREASED COSTS TO USG OF DEPLOYING TANKERS AT FAIRFORD RATHER THAN AT GREENHAM COMMON, THE USAF WISHES TO UTILIZE RED HORSE TO RENOVATE CERTAIN FACILITIES, PREPARE ATHLETIC FIELDS AND CONSTRUCT MWR FACILITIES SINCE RED HORSE UTILIZATION IS ESTIMATED TO SAVE ABOUT ONE-HALF OF THE START-UP COSTS AT FAIRFORD WITH SOME ADDITIONAL SAVINGS COMING FROM "MINOR CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION" IN THE FOLLOW-ON PHASE.

4. WHILE WHITEHALL OFFICIALS ARE SYMPATHETIC TO OUR WISH TO CUT DOWN ON THE COST OF DEPLOYING TO FAIRFORD, MULLEY DECIDED AFTER TAKING STOCK WITH OTHER MINISTERS, THAT THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO APPROACH THE TRADE UNIONS TO SEEK A CHANGE IN THE TERMS OF REFERENCE AGREED BETWEEN PSA AND THE UNIONS CONCERNING UTILIZATION OF RED HORSE PERSONNEL FOR TASKS IN PEACETIME BEYOND RAPID

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RUNWAY REPAIR.

5. WHILE THAT UNDERSTANDING AS WE UNDERSTAND IT DOES/ NOT CATEGORICALLY PRECLUDE RED HORSE UTILIZATION FOR TASKS OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF RAPID RUNWAY REPAIR, THE AGREEMENT DOES REST ON AN UNDERSTANDING BY PSA THAT RED HORSE USE WOULD NOT BE AUTHORIZED BY THE BRITISH FOR WORK THAT WOULD "NORMALLY" BE GIVEN TO A UK CONTRACTOR.

6. MOD OFFICIALS EMPHASIZE THAT PRESSURE IS GROWING RAPIDLY FOR AN EARLY ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE FAIRFORD SELECTION AND MINISTERS DO NOT WISH TO DILUTE THE PROSPECT OF INCREASED LOCAL EMPLOYMENT AS A RESULT OF THE TANKERS GOING TO FAIRFORD BY HAVING TO ACCEPT AT THE SAME TIME INCREASED RED HORSE EMPLOYMENT AS PART OF THE "PRICE OF MAKING A BASE FOR THE KC-L35 AIRCRAFT AVAILABLE TO US.

BREWSTER

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